

The
Alexander Turnbull Library

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

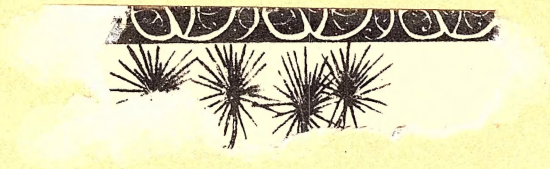
by

C. R. H. TAYLOR



(Reprinted from the New Zealand Year-Book for 1946)

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS,
WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND



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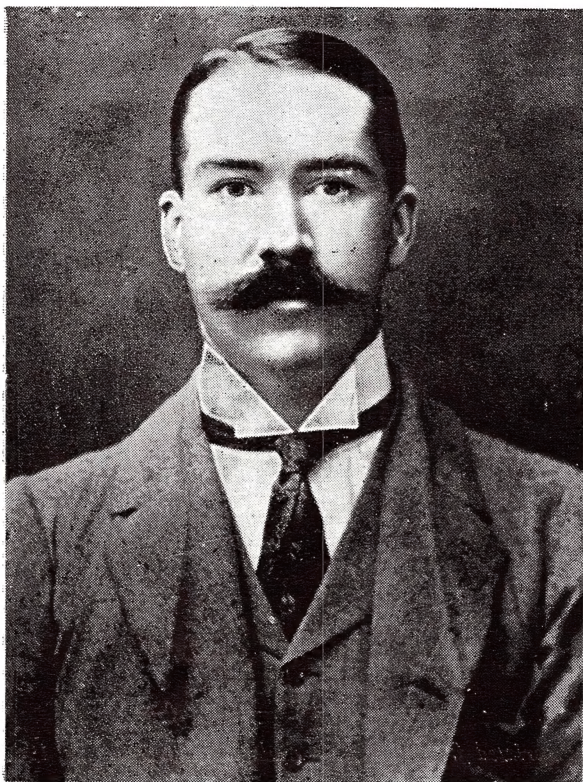
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ALEXANDER HORSBURGH TURNBULL
(1868—1918)

THE ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY

The Alexander Turnbull Library, situated at Bowen Street, Wellington, is a State reference library which owes its origin to the bequest in 1918 of the private collection of Alexander Horsburgh Turnbull. This was the superb achievement of thirty years' assiduous but careful collecting by a man of means and discernment. Turnbull was born in Wellington in 1868, and spent his life here, except for the few years of his education at Dulwich College, London, in the "eighties." From his father and uncle he inherited a substantial fortune with a prosperous mercantile business. Both were laid under heavy tribute in the development of his library, but the result has proved the justification.

The original collection numbered about 55,000 volumes, as well as many manuscripts, pictures, prints, maps, and documents. Thousands of books had been superbly bound by the great masters of the craft, and the general condition of all books was extremely good. The library still occupies the house which was built for it, and which was purchased by the Government on the owner's death. In the intervening years it has grown to nearly 100,000 volumes.

The Internal Affairs Department administers the library, which has a staff of fourteen, including two caretakers, and also provides funds for book purchase, binding, maintenance, &c. Reading privileges are free, but students using research material are required to furnish credentials. By the terms of Mr. Turnbull's will, the library's resources are for reference only, and may not leave the premises.

The library is essentially specialized in character, its collections falling under two broad heads, which may conveniently be called Pacific and non-Pacific. Thus its scope cannot be compared with that of a general library: subjects most noticeably absent are philosophy, sociology, science, applied arts, and technology, though these find representation in the Pacific section. This is, incidentally, separately catalogued and separately located in the building. Detail of these sections follows:—

The Pacific Collection.—This includes New Zealand (which receives particular attention), Australia, Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Of these, Australia, Malaysia, and Indonesia are covered well but not exhaustively, but material on the Oceanic Islands is gathered as fully as possible.

A strong collection of books of early voyaging is the foundation here, and many rare and precious volumes are shelved. To mention a few will indicate their excellence. The great collected editions of Hakluyt 1599–1600, Linschoten 1598, De Bry (88 volumes) 1590–1634, Thévenot 1663–96, Callender 1766–68, and the long series of the Linschoten Society and the Hakluyt Society, are some of the best-known names. Of individual voyages, the earliest printed account of almost every one of note since Magellan (printed 1523) finds a place. Editions of De Quiros 1617, Schouten and Le Maire 1619, and all that are important in the history of Australia and Oceania are here. The literature on Captain James Cook is extensive and is present in a fairly exhaustive gathering of the printed matter; in addition, there are MSS. that are detailed later.

As with voyaging, so with other discovery and exploration, wherein the range of books is well rounded. Inevitably such studies treat of the Native peoples of the Pacific, and this has been stressed with strong holdings on ethnology and linguistics of the area. This latter has led to a collection of over 6,000 volumes in all the Native languages (totalling over 400) of the Pacific.

But voyaging led Alexander Turnbull to give attention to ships and shipping, a favourite subject for a keen yachtsman. The present showing makes a valuable and representative unit. Logically, it led to the adjacent realm of naval lore and history, which have comparable fullness. A large collection of photographs and pictures of mercantile ships is a useful adjunct here.

Another aspect of the exploration material was on the Antarctic. This was already a good group when it was lifted to eminence by the bequest in 1936 of the library of Sir Joseph Kinsey, New Zealand agent for Scott's and Shackleton's expeditions to the South Pole. This included a certain quantity of manuscript letters, association books, and other material.

The sections on fine arts and literature are especially good, and the former is supplemented by a large number of original water-colours, sketches, etchings, &c., while the latter shows notable completeness in poetry by the writers of the region. The collection of fiction was sufficiently complete to be the principal basis for Miss E. M. Smith's "History of New Zealand Fiction," published in 1939.



Hora quale animale che per la dolce efca, lo occulto dolo non perpen-
 de, poſtponendo el naturale biſogno, retro ad quella inhumana nota ſen-
 cia mora cum uehementia feſtinante la uia, io andai. Alla quale quando
 eſſere uenuto ragione uolmente arbitraua, in altra parte la udiua, Oue &
 quando a quello loco properante era giunto, altronde apparea eſſere affir-
 mata. Et cuſi como gli lochi mutaua, ſimilmente piu ſuaue & delecte uo-
 le uoce mutaua cum cœleſti concenti. Dunque per queſta inane fatica,
 & tanto cum moleſta ſete corſo hauendo, me debilitai tanto, che apena
 poteua io el laſſo corpo ſuſtentare. Et gli affannati ſpiriti habili non eſſen-
 do el corpo grauemente affaticato hogi mai ſoſtenire, ſi per el tranſacto pa-
 uore, ſi per la urgente ſete, quale per el longo peruagabondo indagare,
 & etiam per le graue anxietate, & per la calda hora, diſeſo, & relicto
 dalle proprie uirtute, altro unquantulo deſiderando ne appetendo, ſe
 non ad le debilitate membra quieto riſoſo. Mirabondo dellaccidente
 caſo, ſtupido della melliflua uoce, & molto piu per ritrouarme in regio-
 ne incognita & inculta, ma aſſai amœno paefe. Oltra de queſto, forte
 me doleua, che el liquente fonte laborioſamente trouato, & cum tanto
 ſolerte inquiſito fuſſe ſublato & perduto da gliochii mei. Per le quale tu-
 te coſe, io ſtetti cum lanimo intricato de ambiguitate, & molto trapen-
 ſoſo. Finalmente per tanta laſſitudine correpto, tutto el corpo frigeſcen-

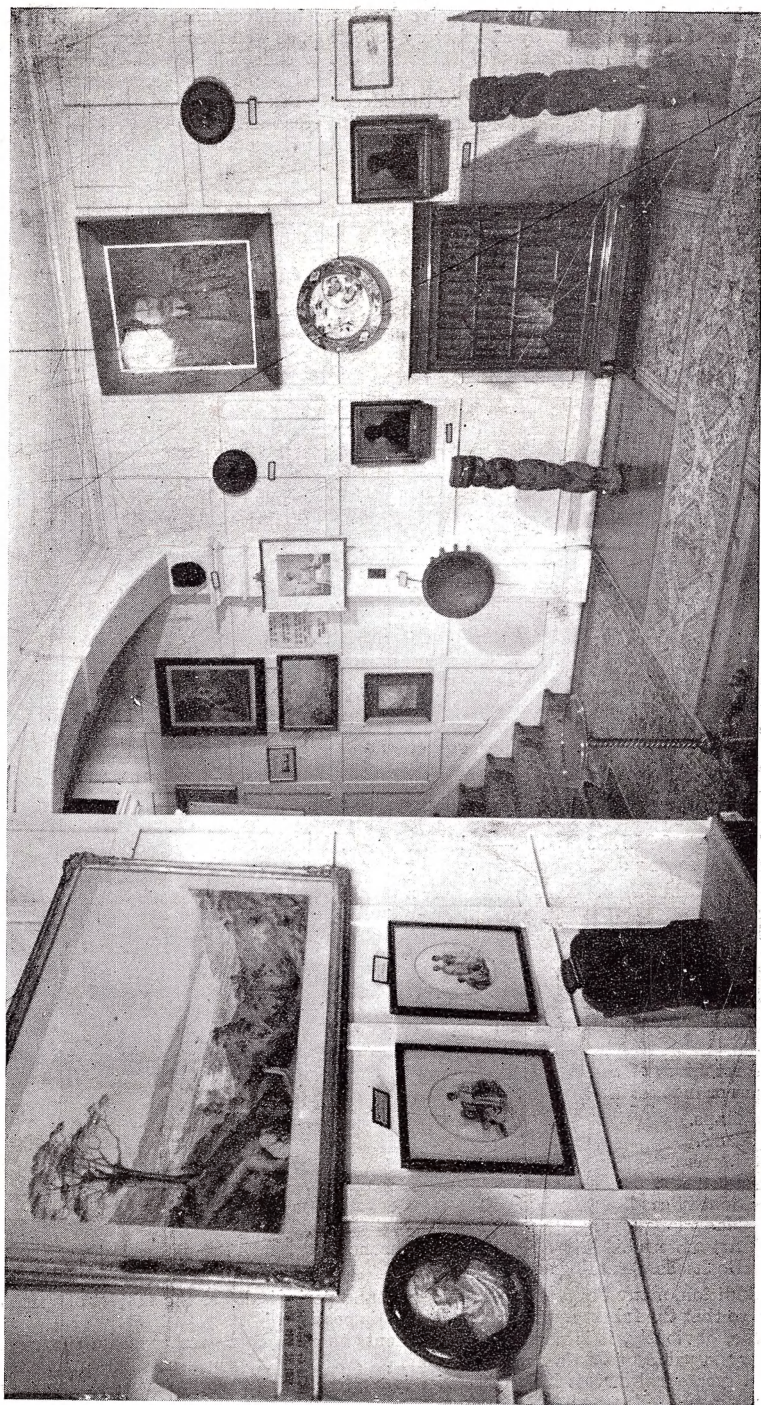
REPRODUCED FROM THE LIBRARY COPY OF COLONNA'S "STRIFE OF
 LOVE IN A DREAM," PRINTED IN 1499 BY ALDUS OF VENICE, AND
 ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFULLY PRINTED BOOK
 OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.



THE ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY, BUILT AS THE HOME AND PRIVATE LIBRARY OF THE FOUNDER.



THE RARE BOOK ROOM



THE ENTRANCE HALL.

The history department tends to receive development in consonance with so popular a study, and this is an eminently satisfactory collection, as well for its primary as for its secondary resources. An offshoot of this has been a collection devoted to the war, 1914-18; and a similar group is evolving from the more recent struggle.

But printed books, while essential to the adequacy of the library, do not alone give it distinction in the fields of New Zealand and Pacific research. This is provided by the substantial holdings of manuscripts. These naturally are predominant in New Zealand documents, but many volumes of importance to Pacific history are in the catalogue. Such are, for instance, Captain James Cook's log of the "Eagle," 1755-56, when he was in naval service before the voyage of exploration; the log of Lieutenant Hicks, an extremely well-kept record of the first voyage; logs of Wales and Bayly, astronomers on the second and third voyages; the journal of Gallego, master pilot on Mendana's voyage of 1565, when he discovered the Solomon Islands; the journal of Antoneli of his exploration of the coast of South America in 1608. These last two have been published as volumes of the Hakluyt Society, and Hicks's log was reproduced in facsimile in McNab's "Historical Records of New Zealand."

But in this brief space only examples can be cited. It is likely to be useful to readers, however, to know something of the scope of the New Zealand MSS.

The principal groups for convenience can be identified by the name of the writer. It is to be understood that these groups are apart from the otherwise unrelated individual volumes or series of MSS. that are fully catalogued. The following, therefore, are not yet fully recorded:—

ELSDON BEST MSS.—Much of this has been drawn on for publication, but a considerable amount yet requires study. It would be of value only to a very experienced student of Maori ethnology.

JOHN WHITE MSS.—Letters and notes throwing light on the methods of the author of the classic "Ancient History of the Maori."

MANTELL MSS.—As Native Minister, Mantell's opportunities for observation were excellent and his journals and letters are a rich mine of material, especially on Maori-land matters.

WILLIAMS MSS.—This large and illustrious family is closely associated with early events in New Zealand, and letters cover the period from 1835 to 1890 written by several members of the family.

STAFFORD PAPERS.—These are not considerable, but they shed light on the background of his ministry.

McNAB PAPERS.—These comprise mainly material upon which McNab drew for his "Historical Records," &c.

SMALLER COLLECTIONS.—Ballance, Stout, Tinline, Bradey, Percy, and Buick. These are of varying quality and may yield useful detail.

McLEAN PAPERS.—This is relatively a very large group, which embraces a number of other lesser ones. It is extremely good in quality and wide in scope, and constitutes probably the richest single group of the private records of an eminent man so far in any institution in New Zealand.

In addition to these, great quantities of MSS. especially of early missionaries have been borrowed and copied into typescript, which has been bound and generally indexed. Thus the original material of all kinds is fairly extensive, and generally of a high level of quality.

The resources of the library are catalogued and indexed in many ways. Separate catalogues or indexes are available as follows:—

Maps.	Handwritings.
MSS.	Bindings.
Letters.	Association books.
Portraits.	Bookplates.
South Seas languages.	Books before 1640.
Maori language.	Periodicals.
Art material.	Chronological book list before 1800.
Booksellers' catalogues in books.	

In addition, many important printed books and periodicals are the subject of special indexes, so that the fullest approach to material is possible.

While, obviously, it is necessary for students to consult the resources on the spot, the library is willing to do a certain amount of research for people at a distance, and, indeed, a great deal of this kind of service is rendered by correspondence, particularly through other libraries.

Non-Pacific Section.—This might be described as consisting of a number of collections, each fairly representative in itself, even sometimes near completion in significant works. The first considerable field is that of English literature, with emphasis upon English poetry, drama, and the stage. And head and shoulders above the rest is the Milton collection, rich in first editions and others down the years, rich in studies, biographical and critical works, and quite strong in influencing and contemporary books. It is a collection that is added to as far as possible to-day, and its value lies not only in its specific wealth, but for the mass of material that reflects the genius of seventeenth century England.

Good collections gather about the names of Robert and Elizabeth Browning, Swinburne, William Morris, Defoe and "Crusonia," Thackeray, Kipling, Samuel (Erewhon) Butler, Shakespeare, and the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. Scottish literature is particularly full; there are fine sets of important literary periodicals—*English Literary History*, the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Annual Register*, *Scots Magazine*, the *Retrospective Review*, the *Review of English Studies*, the *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, and *Modern Language Review* are titles at random. The letter files list correspondence from scores of notable literary and historical figures, and here and there are other manuscripts of varying significance, many yet to be studied.

Supporting these groups are works of biography referring to most of the figures whose works are shelved. And here it may be stressed that a constant objective is to maintain homogeneity in the collections, that works outside the usual scope may be excluded, and reasonable development accorded to the rest.

The book itself is the subject of many books in the library. The history of written and printed records, the study of paper, binding, illustrating, are well covered, and good and often famous examples of most aspects of the subject are to be found. The collection of fifteenth-century books is small but choice—there are examples of mediæval manuscript, books from famous presses such as those of Stephanus, Plantin, Aldus, Elzevir, Koberger, Ratdoldt, Baskerville, Bulmer down to the Ashendene, Kelmscott, Merrymount, Golden Cockerel, Doves, and Nonesuch. The Wood collection of illustrations and illustrated books of the "sixties" is the most specialized among such, but significant examples from most periods of the printing era, and by famous illustrators, were part of the original bequest.

This section bears some relationship to that devoted to art, which is an extremely choice and useful small collection of about 2,000 volumes.

Mention has been made, in describing the Pacific collection, of the naval and shipping section, but this is continued in the general collection.

It contains a well-rounded assembly of standard and often rare works, supplemented with important serials such as the Naval Records Society publications, the *Mariner's Mirror*, the *Naval Chronicle*, &c.

The history section is not of particular strength, except where it blends with the rest of the library. It has good groups, however, in early chronicles, in Scottish and Irish history up till last century, in Canadian and West Indies history for the early period, in Italian statecraft of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and in the war of 1914-18.

Bequests and Gifts.—These have been the source of many individual volumes and groups up to considerable libraries. Of the latter, the following are important:—

KINSEY COLLECTION, gifted in 1936, was gathered by Sir Joseph Kinsey, and in 15,000 volumes has specialization in New Zealand material, Antarctica, English literature (notably Butler), art, and general reference.

MANTELL COLLECTION, presented in 1927, contained about 1,000 volumes, many hundreds of MS. letters and journals, &c., and many rare books in literature. Under each of these heads are items of extreme importance, and the collection added the greatest distinction to the holdings of the library.

TRIMBLE COLLECTIONS.—Mr. M. Trimble, of Masterton, presented about 200 volumes of Italian statecraft, with emphasis upon Machiavelli, many of contemporary date. Miss Nora Trimble presented the 1,200-volume collection of her father, Colonel Robert Trimble, of Inglewood. This consisted mainly of Irish history and literature, but contained many works of wider interest and importance.

ATKINSON COLLECTION.—One quarter (about 1,000 volumes) of A. R. Atkinson's library was bequeathed to the Turnbull Library in 1935, adding strength to the shelves of English and classical literature.

HENRY WRIGHT COLLECTION.—This was bequeathed in 1936, and brought about 800 volumes on comparative and early religion, psychology, and sociology of distinctive value to the library.

PARADISE LOST
 THE AUTHOR
 JOHN MILTON

OF
 MANS FIRST DISOBEDIENCE,
 AND THE FRUIT
 OF THAT FORBIDDEN TREE,
 WHOSE MORTAL TAST
 BROUGHT DEATH INTO THE
 WORLD, AND ALL OUR WOE,

With loss of Eden, all one greater Man
 Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,
 Sing Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,
 In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
 Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's Brook that flow'd
 Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous Song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime,
 And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,

16

Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first Book 1

Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread

Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss

And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark

Illumine, what is low raise and support;

That to the height of this great Argument

I may assert Eternal Providence,

And justify the wayes of God to men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view

Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause

Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,

Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off

From their Creator, and transgress his Will

For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?

Who first seduc'd them to that fowl revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile

Steal'd up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd

The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride

Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host

Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring

To set himself in Glory above his Peers,

He trusted to have equal'd the most High,

If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim

Against the Throne and Monarchy of God

Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Bred proud

With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power

Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie

With hideous ruine and combustion down

To bottomless perdition, there to dwell

17

b

HOGG COLLECTION.—Robert Hogg in 1941 bequeathed his library of Scottish literature and English poetry. This added considerable new material to these sections, in about 1000 volumes.

EARP COLLECTION.—Mr. E. A. Earp, for many years senior apiarist of the Department of Agriculture, presented in 1939 about 400 volumes on bee culture as a memorial to his wife.

In addition, two endowments bring in a small income. Sir George Shirtcliff's fund is for the development of the English literature classes, and Sir Harold Beauchamp's fund for the extension of the Katherine Mansfield Collection.

Friends of the Turnbull Library.—This organization was formed in 1939 for the general purpose of publishing a journal, *The Turnbull Library Record*, and for aiding in acquisition and dissemination of information on behalf of the library.

Publications.—The library issues an annual report, a series of bulletins on various subjects, a series of *Bibliographical Lists* of books, &c., and a few small miscellaneous items, mostly in duplicated form.

LIBRARY HOURS

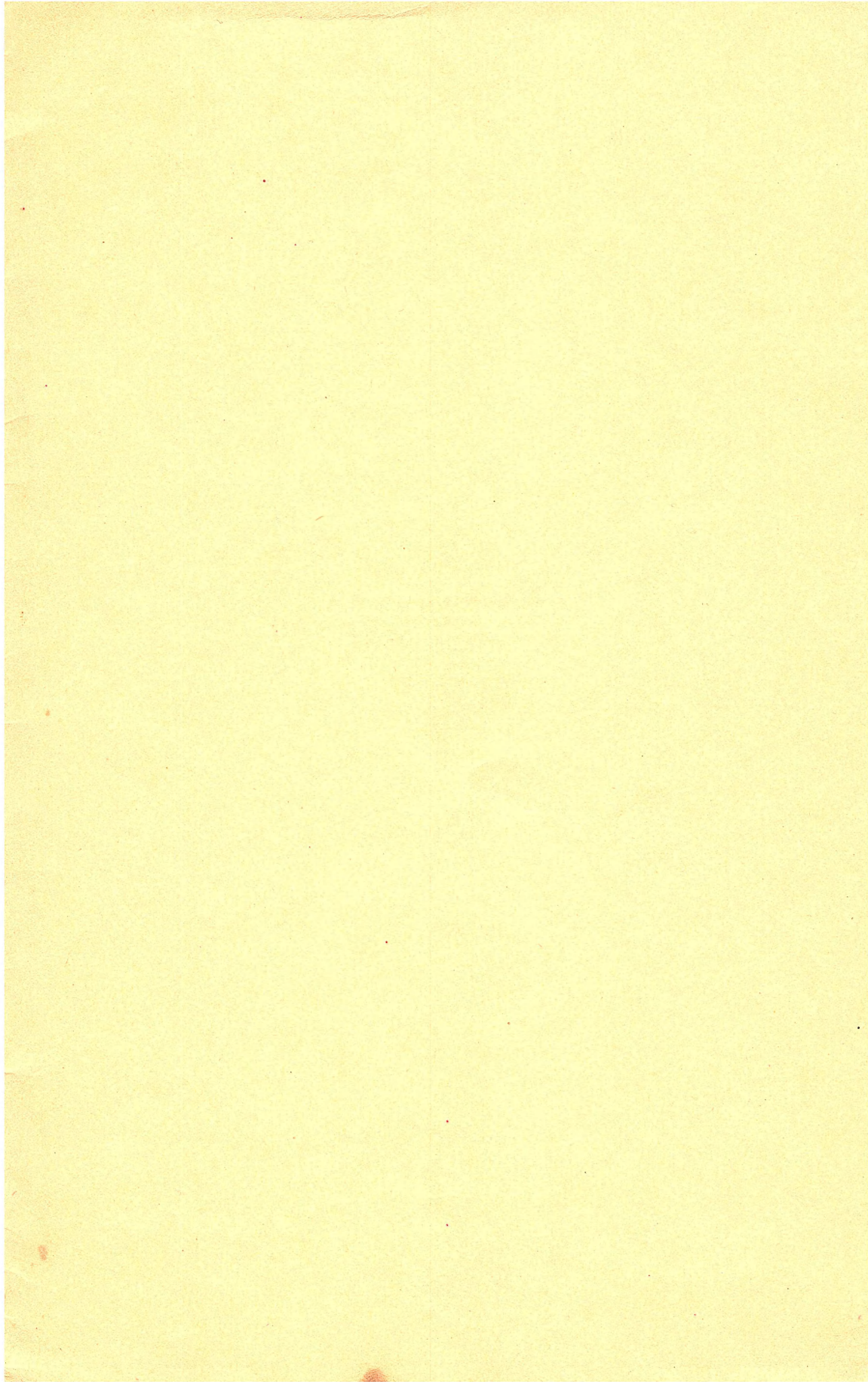
Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Saturday, 9 a.m. to Noon.

(For Readers only, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 7 to 9.30 p.m.)

Sunday, 2 to 4 p.m. (for Visitors only).

*Reference services of the Library are free for visitors
and privileged readers alike.*



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E. V. PAUL, GOVERNMENT PRINTER
WELLINGTON, N.Z.
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1949
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